Engineer Memoirs

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN W. MORRIS

U.S.A. Retired

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Childhood and West Point Years

Q: I would like to start out by asking you a little bit about your early life. You are a native of Princess Anne, Maryland. Was your family originally from that area?

A: My mother's family and my father's family are among the original families over in Tidewater. Both came there in the mid-1600s. My mother's family was Tilghman and is well known in Tidewater. In fact, one of our relatives was Colonel Tench Tilghman, who was Adjutant General for George Washington. My mother's family moved from the lower part-possibly the Eastern Shore of Virginia—up into Worcester County, Maryland, near Berlin and Snow Hill. My father's family was from a similar area, and they migrated northward into Somerset County. Incidentally, Somerset County at one time included Worcester County. My father's family settled near the family home where I was born.

Over the years several in the family were military types. In the Civil War my family was predominantly Southern; my great grandfather died as the result of being imprisoned by Union troops. The Eastern shore of Maryland supported the Confederacy. Constants in my background include the area, the family roots, and a small-town atmosphere. Few people ever left. They all stayed and lived and died there. They regenerated themselves. There were not that many families to start. Most of the people there now are probably relatives, so to speak.

The Morris family was mercantile. They were not among the elite by any sense of the word, yet they were comfortable.

Q: How about your father? What was his occupation?

A: His father, my grandfather, owned a clothing store-John W. Morris and Sons. There were three sons. Before he died one son had moved to California and the other two then opened up their own separate mercantile businesses. My father later bought a theater and was in the theater and clothing business when the Depression of 1929 almost wiped him out. He held on, barely. In 1934 he was appointed postmaster in Princess Anne. He was a strong Democrat and a county leader in the Democratic Party, so Franklin D. Roosevelt made him postmaster. In those days that was a reward for long and faithful service, I guess. He was qualified to be postmaster, too, I don't mean that.

Both my mother and father worked very hard in the theater business. Money for my schooling was hard to come by. I was not a great student in any sense of the word, but I was able to get a scholarship to finish high school at the Charlotte Hall Military Academy on the Western shore of Maryland in Saint Mary's County. I graduated from that high school in 1937 when I was 15, and I needed a lot of growing up to do before I went to college. So I stayed for a post-graduate year in 1938. I worked for my father in 1939.

When the time came to go to college, I received a scholarship to Western Maryland College. Before that I had taken the entrance exam to West Point, but my poor background in English showed up, and I didn't pass. So I went to Western Maryland College and was fortunate enough to get another appointment as a first alternate. I took the entrance exam again and passed. The man before me failed, and I entered West Point and ultimately became one of the few members of my family to get a college education.

Q: How long were you actually at Western Maryland? One year?

A: Yes.

Q: I understand that your mother was interested in your going to West Point. Why was that?

A: Well, it seemed that way to me. It's been a long time, of course. I don't think my father was against it, but my mother associated more directly with my day-to-day training than my father.

They were good, strong people. You look back over all the things, and you wonder, well, what was the chemistry that made things work? I'd have to say that I was fortunate to have been born and raised in a small town with good, solid parents. Some credit must go to the Depression, I think, because it imposed an appreciation of things—life, people, responsibility, natural things, et cetera. Princess Anne is in a rather isolated area.

I don't know when or why West Point became attractive to my parents, but I have a feeling that it was my mother who fostered my attendance.

Q: Was the Naval Academy ever a consideration since you were a native of the Eastern Shore?

A: Too close to home! I don't know the reason, really. Many have asked me the same question: Why are you going to West Point?

I was only the second person in my area to go. The other man was Bill Quinn. He became a three-star general. General William [Bill] Quinn is well known and greatly liked in Army circles and filled an important role in World War II. His father and uncle and my father were very close friends. Maybe that had something to do with why I went to West Point.

Q: Were you enthusiastic about going?

A: Yes, when I failed the exam the first time, it became a challenge. I was delighted to go. We were just getting out of the Depression, the war clouds still didn't seem too dark, and the education was most attractive.

The attitude in those days was rather patriotic. My going to West Point was a well-publicized local event. Everybody in the town seemed involved and behind it. A community effort, you might say.

Q: How about brothers and sisters?

A: I have no brothers and sisters. I did have a very close extended family, however. My father's brother had four children, and my mother and father helped raise them because of some family problems. We were all very close.

Q: What kind of interests did you have in high school? Sports? Were you an outdoors man? Maybe your father was-1 don't know.

A: My father was an avid baseball fan, and he very much enjoyed horse racing. He was also a baseball manager. The day I was born, he was managing the Princess Anne semi-professional baseball team which was playing for the state championship against Frederick. Frederick won 1–0.

You know, you hear these stories from your parents all your life. That was his thing. He was not an athlete. He was a very smart man, though. Good head on him, good businessman, very compassionate, well liked-extremely well liked-and a generous person.

My mother's family, though, was more of a hands-on kind of a family-farming, well drilling, pump business, mechanical kinds of things. My father's family was strictly a business family,

believing you can do better thinking than you can manually. My mother's family was just the opposite.

In growing up I was very much immersed in horses, Boy Scouts, church, and athletics. I did well in athletics. I was captain of the basketball team in high school and was recognized in high school for athletics.

Being from that part of the world, you're bound to be interested in natural things-outdoor things. That's the way it was. Even during the darkest days of the Depression, people could live fairly well. They didn't need much money because they lived off the land. Your neighbors looked out for you. As long as you had your health, you could probably survive with a minimum amount of money. So I was very much into, I would say, anything to do with outdoors, athletics, that kind of thing.

Q: When you went to West Point, did you have any idea of where you wanted to go in the Army?

A: We knew when we went in that we would be there for four years and have a three-year service obligation afterwards. I didn't go there with the idea of being an engineer. I knew I was going to be in the Army, and that was okay, but I had no idea about a branch.

Q: Did you have any knowledge of the Corps of Engineers from your home area?

A: Yes, a little bit because, being in the Tidewater area, there was quite a bit of drainage activity. I used to see these cars go by with "USED" on them all the time. I couldn't figure out what that was. It was "United States Engineering Department."

Then the other side of the military—well, it wasn't directly military-was the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps]. I remember that quite well.

The closest I ever came to anything military before Charlotte Hall was playing in the firemen's band. We used to march occasionally.

Q: What courses did you pursue at Western Maryland during that one year?

A: Because I graduated from high school so young, I had taken a high school post-graduate course. Based on placement tests on entering college, I ended up taking mostly all sophomore subjects at Western Maryland. After the sophomore year, I intended making a final decision, but I was leaning towards business because of my family background.

Q: What were some of the things about growing up on the Eastern Shore that you see influencing your life?

A: You know, there are a lot of things you remember. In those very tough days of the early 1930s, people there were quite vigilante-minded. Our little town was quite volatile. Our home wasn't too far from the jail. One night an angry crowd broke into the jail and removed and lynched a prisoner accused of rape. I was 12 and observed parts of the rampage. Things like that do have an impact.

Even now, I think of the Eastern Shore people as being very independent. They're not big on government. They're big on independence. I think it gives you a broader view of humanity and maybe a little more understanding. You grow up making up your own mind, living with your decisions, I guess.

One thing that it helped me with is the ability to get along with people. I think I did learn from growing up over there-how to deal with everyday, average income people, and how to communicate with people. I think that's been a positive thing.

The Morrises were Episcopalians, so I was raised in that church. In our home, Sunday was truly a day of rest—I was not allowed to play any games, certainly no movies or shopping. Weather permitting, we drove every Sunday after church to my mother's family in Berlin, Maryland, for Sunday dinner. My mother always did the driving.

Even though people are quite independent and self-sufficient, when help was needed everybody helped. As a small-towner, everybody knew what was going on. So you were always responsible for what you did. You couldn't get away with anything. Or, if you did, you had the idea you'd pay for it sooner or later.

So, you know, that may be something you don't get in a large city where, because there are so many people, you're not noticed so much, or most people don't pay attention to you. That wasn't my case. I think that was the background I took to West Point. I was probably a little more mature than most cadets-not because I was older, but because of my experiences. I didn't have any trouble, for example, with the plebe year or "beast barracks." That was all fairly easy for me.

Q: Were you aware of beast barracks before you went?

A: I had heard all the bad things, but they weren't always true. Then when you get in the middle of it, it's a day-by-day operation, and you find you can survive rather comfortably.

You begin to analyze, become conscious of your circumstances, and you adjust to them. I think the most successful cadets-not necessarily academically, but in terms of getting the most from the West Point experience—are those who see West Point for what it is and realize not to take life too seriously in spite of all the pressures.

You need to find some vocation as a vent to your emotions—some athletic or extracurricular activity. Don't get too uptight about anything because you can drive yourself nuts at that place once you begin to worry.

Q: Did you start in the summer of 1940?

A: Yes. I entered the first of July. My father accompanied me to West Point with another man who drove. Dad let me out of the car, and I went in, and that was that. I didn't get home for 18 months. In those days, cadets didn't go home until the second Christmas, which in our case happened to be 194 1 -Pearl Harbor.

Q: That's right.

A: So they cut Christmas leave in half, to seven days. Then the following summer, which was supposed to be a 60-day vacation, we stayed all but about two weeks, as I recall, at school. We graduated in three years. So our class was under constant pressure, you might say.

Q: How about that December? Do you remember 1941?

A: Oh, very clearly.

Q: What impact did that have on you as a West Point cadet?

A: It made all the difference in the world. Seven December 1941, of course, was a Sunday. It was an event which causes you to remember exactly where you were when it occurred. I had a date that weekend, and we were standing in line outside of the cadet theater when the news of Pearl Harbor reached us. I turned to the young lady who was with me and said, "Well, that's going to change everything up here for a while." Within a week, our Christmas vacation had been curtailed. After the new year [1942] we were told that our class would graduate in June 1943, or one year early.

Q: I didn't realize that you knew that so soon.

A: Yes, and that changed our whole academic curriculum immediately. Major changes were made in the voluntary or the optional portions. We concentrated on the hard-core portions of the educational program.

It became a very tough course. The fact is, I think it had some significant advantages. It wasn't just three years of the same old thing. We learned in three years what normally you'd get in four years-that is, the substantive courses. It put us into a different esprit. We were in a more enthusiastic culture. We couldn't resign, so everybody's purpose in life became a lot more focused. We knew that upon graduation it was off to war, unless the war had ended. So in addition to the program changes, it had a big impact philosophically.

Q: How about some of the specific changes in the program?

A: You mean, because of this?

Q: Yes.

A: Well, the main thing was academics. Many of the officers up there were sent off to war-a lot of the instructors. That meant more civilian instructors, and even the smartest of the class yet to graduate were made instructors. I had several instructors who were first classmen, and they were excellent instructors.

As our academic work program intensified, the athletic program was curtailed to some extent. Not eliminated, just curtailed.

Q: What about training?

A: Military training?

Q: Yes. What kind of training was there?

A: It was modified somewhat. Your branch training became more significant-branch training meaning that training related to the branch you thought you were going to choose. That didn't always mean the one you went into. I took branch training in coast artillery. I ended up going into the engineers—which is another day, another story. Actually, the whole attitude, the whole atmosphere was quite changed. The things that we talked about changed. On the other hand, those items in the military education curriculum which were applicable were retained-like the major campaigns of Napoleon, the Civil War, et cetera. We continued to study those for their value in military history and tactics and to some extent military engineering, but we didn't spend as much time on those things which could be learned elsewhere later.

Q: What about weapons?

A: There was not great change in the weapons. There may have been some effort to modernize a few items. I don't recall anything there.

Q: You said that some of the upperclassmen became instructors and were quite good. Do you remember who any of them were?

A: Yes. John Schremp, later an engineer colonel, retired. Henry J. Halsell was an instructor. Gosh, I don't know. There are a whole bunch of them I can think of that did teach. Many became engineer officers later on. The two I mentioned—Halsell and Schremp-were both engineer officers. My only problem now is it's been so long ago, I can't remember all of their names. Sy Coker was another.

Q: Was Jewett one of them?

A: Jewett. Well, he had graduated earlier, in 1940 I believe, and was gone by the time I got to West Point.

Q: He wasn't there as an instructor, as you remember, at that point? He wouldn't have been an upperclass instructor?

A: No, but I knew him later. Colonel Richard L. Jewett became my boss when we were in Germany in the 1950s.

Q: I was just going to ask you about some of your classmates. Who in your class did you become closest with at the time that you were there?

A: Well, let's see. My company classmates as a group, then there was my roommate, Frank [Francis] Dirkes. He was an engineer. He became deputy engineer in Hawaii. While transferring to Savannah he had a heart attack and died. Dutch [Glenn] Ingwersen was an engineer who retired as a deputy division engineer, South Atlantic Division. He was from Iowa and captain of the wrestling team and later my best man and closest friend. Jim Phillips, an artilleryman, was another roommate of mine and remains a close, respected friend.

Then there were those who were killed, and whom I knew well as a cadet. Ned Almond, whose father was a general, Bill Wickham, Johnny Hummell -they were company mates of mine. Over the years Bob Mathe, whom you've probably heard of, and I have become friends.

I knew many classmates as athletes. General [Bernard] Rogers and I were very close throughout our cadet career. We were on the track team together. He was our first captain. Lee Hogan, class president, was also on the track team.

I knew most of the class, but the ones I was closest to would certainly be my roommates and my company mates. Howard Coffman, now in Dallas, later became my deputy in Vietnam.

Q: How about Glasgow?

A: Bill Glasgow was in another company, so I only came to know him well later.

Q: Parfitt?

A: Hal Parfitt, very close friend. Hal was on the track team. Hal and I had almost similar careers, up until the time I became Chief and he went to Panama. He was the first member of our class to make colonel.

Bob Mathe was the first member of our class to make general, regardless of branch. Parfitt got a battlefield promotion in Korea, and he made colonel in 1955 or 1956, 1957 at the latest. He did very well. As it turned out, the class of June 1943 produced many engineer generals-Mathe, Parfitt, Glasgow, [Kenneth] Sawyer, [Charles] Reed to name several.

Q: So the track team was your basic athletic activity?

A: Basketball was high on the list at first. I was doing very well with basketball until in the gym one day, I hit the back end of a long-horse and busted my knee.

Members of the track team at West Point in the spring of 1943. John W. Morris is on the right and Bernard Rogers, later Chief of Staff of the Army, is on the left.

So they sent me down to the track to work it off. By the beginning of the basketball season, I was about well when a young child stepped out in the track directly in front of me, and I stopped quickly and pulled a muscle in the other leg. So I missed the basketball season.

Later in the spring of 1941 I told the trainer that I thought I was okay, and I would like to leave track. He said, "Well, there's a plebe track meet coming up, and I want you to run the 100-yard dash in this meet to see if you are okay. The coach will put you out on the side all by yourself." I won the race, and I set a new plebe record for the 100-yard dash. From then on, I never left the track team. That's how I got on the track squad and had a very successful career in track.

Q: Did you keep up with the basketball?

A: No. You see, outdoor track was in the spring, and basketball season conflicted with winter indoor track. I was doing so well, I just stayed there. I had the fastest quarter mile in the United States in 1943 and won the intercollegiate championships.

Q: That was something you had just started to do?

A: As a kid back home, when I was young, I used to run all the time. I didn't know I could run fast. I would have stayed with the 100 at West Point, but General Rogers was a good sprinter. They

also had a couple of other 100-yard dash people, but they didn't have any quarter-milers. So I ended up running the 220 and the quarter mile. In the 1943 Navy meet, I ran the 100, the 220, the quarter mile and the mile relay. The fellow who won the 100—I ran second-still has the record for the Army-Navy game. I beat him in the 220, set an Academy record. We also set records in the mile relay and the 440 run.

Later, Glen Davis of football fame, after playing nine innings of baseball, joined the track meet and broke the 220 record that I set several years before.

Q: I imagine the people back home were pleased to see the results?

A: Oh, yes, sure. We ran Navy at Annapolis one year, and many came over there to see that. Fortunately I did well, but that was just part of it. I was involved at West Point. I guess I didn't put as much time in academics as maybe I should have. For example, I was a Sunday school teacher and later became superintendent of Sunday schools. Cadets teach Sunday school to dependents-children of the officers and enlisted people. So after two years, I ended up in charge of all the Sunday school teachers. That was a very good experience and a diversion.

I joined other activities which are listed in the yearbook. My idea was, you could kill yourself studying. I had one roommate who was brilliant, Frank Dirkes. He was a star man. I had another roommate who had some troubles-Philips. I was sort of in the middle. I never had many worries about not passing.

I enjoyed cadet life because of diversified activities. That was one of the learning points after I'd gotten up there, trying to figure out how to make life at West Point enjoyable.

Q: In line with what you were saying earlier about what makes the successful cadet, as far as coping with beast barracks and all that, it sounds like that was one way of doing it.

A: Well, it was. Without being smart enough to figure it all out, it was a rather successful arrangement. I ended up getting in the Corps of Engineers-albeit from way down on the list. I was a senior cadet officer on the military side and did well in athletics. I wasn't outstanding in anything except maybe the quarter mile, but I did a lot of other things and seemed to get along pretty well with them.

Q: As the war went on, how did you at the Academy react to it?

A: We were anxious to get out and get in it. We did, incidentally. I managed to make the activities on Guam. Our class had the largest number killed in combat of any class in West Point history, and we were second historically in percentage killed. Our class graduated and went right off to war.

I think my company alone lost 8 out of 32. Practically everybody got into the war. Our class graduated in June of 1943. There were two years of war left, and you could be in combat in six months. Ours was one of the few classes which was provided flight training for those wanting the air corps. About 40 percent of our class entered the air corps on graduation day as qualified pilots. Three had been killed in training exercises while still cadets.

On the other hand, I don't know how much of wanting to get to war was a real and honest emotion or how much of it was invigorated by our environment. You know, it's just hard to envision until it happens. I didn't go to one of the most exotic, hotly contested areas; but it was hot enough for me once I found out what it was all about.

Q: What about your getting into the engineers? You started out, you said, with not much idea what you wanted to do. Then you were interested in the coast artillery.

A: I really never thought I'd make the Corps of Engineers until the last weeks of my first-class [senior] program. Following an average first year, each following year got significantly better academically.

At the end of the third academic year [January 1943] I was somewhere around 200th in my class of over 500—much too low for the Corps.

I was a fairly good student in sciences, and in the last year they loaded up on the technical stuff. Well, as fate would have it, I improved my position a great deal in the last six months.

Q: Were you really trying for an engineer commission?

A: No, I really was not. I wanted to be a good cadet and officer. I would have been satisfied with the artillery or armor. As you recall, I chose artillery branch training.

A couple of days before the branch selection, a professor came to see me and told me my class standing would be quite a bit better than I might have thought and I would probably have a chance to choose engineers. The professor was an engineer and indicated he would like me to go into the engineers.

My roommate, Dirkes, who was so smart, knew all along he was going to be an engineer. He knew from the beginning what he wanted. Phillips thought he would not have a choice. He'd have to take what was left by the time they got to him, but he would have liked artillery. It turned out that Frank got the engineers and Jim got the artillery because his grades had improved also Frank was working on my situation, and he told me I should probably take the engineers.

Q: Who was the professor?

A: I don't remember his name. I could probably find out. He was a major. Nevertheless, I talked to quite a few people and thought I'd rather be a smart artilleryman than a dumb engineer among my peer group. That was the big problem. Finally, I thought, "Okay, I like science. I like math. I've always been interested in building things. So I'm going to do it." When my time came to choose, there were five or six engineers slots left, so I took engineers.

I became a dumb engineer, relatively speaking. Years later, General [Ernie] Graves made a study of the class standing of the West Point engineers who became three-star generals. They were pretty high, except for me—I was an exception to the rule. Graves, of course, is a brilliant man. He had one of the highest academic averages ever achieved at West Point.

I never forgot my weakness in English. I worked hard after I graduated, learning how to write, how to talk, how to read quickly. I think the fact that I was poor in language caused me over the years to become better. I have always been a little bit self-conscious about it, so I have probably worked on it more than most people.

Anyhow, I really was down in the pile. There's no question about that. I think I was 140 in my class of about 516 graduates. Most of the graduates who get to be engineer generals-well, you can go back and look-they're probably all in the top 20 or 30. You probably cannot find another Chief of Engineers as far down the list as I was.

Q: After you left West Point, did you keep thinking about your standing?

A: I never thought about it the rest of my life, except on an occasion like this interview.

The other thing, though, after our graduation there were so many people in the Army that a West Pointer was seldom seen. At first I went to a training center at MacDill Field, Florida, the 3d

Engineer Aviation Unit Training Center, and there were several West Pointers there. However, later I was the only regular Army officer, much less West Pointer, in my battalion.

Well, wait a minute. I take that back. We had one regular Army captain who had been promoted after some 20 years of enlisted service. He was a regular officer, so there were two of us, but I was the only West Pointer.

My next battalion did have a West Pointer as exec, a Major Jim Hottenroth.

So, to answer your question, once you leave West Point, class standing is not a factor unless you look at a USMA [U.S. Military Academy] roster. The standing serves a useful purpose at West Point, but it's not a factor in daily life of the Army. We don't ask whether a man is smart or not. You deal with him as you find him. A lot of that has to do with how good you are at listening to people and how good you are at talking to them.

Q: I guess one of the things that led me to ask that was your comment about the other Chiefs of Engineers and where they have stood in their class. What you seem to be saying is that if you choose to look at that, you find that other people don't really think about it much.

Graduation Picture of Cadet Captain John W. Morris in 1943.

A: As a matter of fact, I will say this. I don't believe I ever demonstrated at West Point my actual academic capability. The things I wanted to do well, I did very well, if I worked on it-like electricity, I was eighth or ninth in my class. Law, I was fourth or fifth. I don't know what to make of that, except I think it always gave me a little extra initiative once commissioned to do well because I thought I had to prove something.

Q: You said you were the senior cadet on the military side?

A: No, not ***the*** senior cadet. I meant to say I was ***a*** senior cadet.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: I think out of my class, I was about 12 or better in cadet rank. Rogers was number one, always.

Q: Now, you've said some things that indicate why that was true. Do you have any more comments about yourself as a leader?

A: It was probably because I realized at the end of my plebe year that I wasn't going to go far unless I was recognized for something. When you hid your light under a bushel at West Point, it's going to stay there. There's no question about it.

So when that third-class list to corporal did not include me, and I saw the people that were on it, I realized they were well known as athletes and other noticeable activities. So I'd say the thing to do is to get to be known.

I guess I left West Point pretty satisfied with life-but not ready to get married, however.

Q: You mean at graduation time, and that many did?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Even though they were going off to war?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: That was the last chance?

A: It didn't seem to make a whole lot of difference. I guess the pluses and minuses probably averaged out.

World War II and Early Post-War Assignments

Q: You went into an engineer aviation battalion, is that correct?

A: Yes. I went to a battalion that was segregated. All the soldiers were black; all the officers were white. The second battalion, we had one black officer who was the chaplain.

Q: They were listed on your record as the 1895th and 1869th.

A: The '95th was the first one. It was a good battalion, incidentally-a high-performance battalion-well disciplined, no major problems. Our people came out of the construction industry, and the equipment operators were just splendid in spite of the fact that it was segregated—which in those days was not in spite of anything. That's the way it was. I would have put ours with any battalion, any engineering battalion, really, looking back on it. The operators were versatile-older. I don't know how we would have done on some kind of sophisticated IQ test or something. They were good at their business.

I come back to a little story. I left West Point, and I was sent to [Fort] Belvoir, of course. Everybody went to Belvoir. We won the championship in softball, I remember that. The things you remember and don't remember! Four others and I were all sent to MacDill Field, Florida, to join the 3d Engineer Aviation Unit Training Center. Earlier, while I was at West Point, I had dislocated my shoulder as an instructor in bayonet training. At MacDill Field I was alerted for overseas but was told I couldn't go because of the shoulder. So I went to the hospital and had it fixed. It cost me about a month's time.

I ended up leaving MacDill Field for Dale Mabry Field in Tallahassee where I finished out my battalion training and then moved overseas. We took a troop train across the United States to Fort Lawton, sailed to Hawaii, and moved north up to Kahuka, Oahu. We worked on an existing airfield and built a theater.

Unfortunately the theater burned down just as it was being completed. Since I was in charge of the electrical work, I was sure everybody was going to blame me for it. So I went down the next day and took a picture of the master switch box to prove it was "off."

Finally, they sent us off to Yap on LSTs [landing ships, tanks]. I was then troop quartermaster charged to load five ships—LSTs—one for each line company plus two for headquarters company.

The Yap battle was deferred, so we went into Guam instead. It took us 16 days-turtles swam faster than those LSTs. It was a long trip. At any rate, we got there.

We dropped our front ramp, unloaded all our stuff, went ashore, passed by the 3d Marine Battalion-which had just fought the Battle of Santa Rosa, Mount Santa Rosa-went into our area and started to set up our camp. After a week or so, I was sent out by the battalion commander with a bulldozer, a photographer, and one rifleman to start building North Field-now Anderson Air Force Base, Guam.

We broke the trail into the construction site, unloaded the tractor, knocked down a few gum trees and some other stuff, made a few pictures, loaded the tractor back up, and went back to camp. We didn't return to the airfield for another three weeks or so.

That picture was to show we had started on time. Nevertheless, our mission was to build this airfield and have it finished in six months by the first of February.

I was responsible for quite a few things. Of course, everybody had clearing. I worked the quarry. Then I had the job of putting in the electrical work for the runway lighting system.

In mid-December, I came from work about 5:00 A.M. after I'd been up all night, in a disgusted mood for some reason or another. I remember that Lieutenant Ken West was in the mess and asked me, "What're you so unhappy about? You're going home today." I said, "Don't kid me, today's not the day to play games." It turned out I was going home. There was another Morris on the island who was a battalion commander, but I was the one tapped to rotate.

Q: That would have been 1944?

A: 1944, Christmas, the Battle of the Bulge in Europe. I took all the patches off my shirts-those old Third Air Force patches from MacDill Field. I was sure I wouldn't go again, but I was sent back to MacDill Field. Had to sew all the patches back on. I was also sent right back to Dale Mabry, the same place I'd been before. Lived in the same barracks. We were shipped out and went right back to Guam! That's unbelievable, but that's what happened.

We landed in Guam, and the old battalion was out to meet us. They knew we were coming, and somehow or other, they knew I was with the new battalion. The second battalion was not very good. We had some pretty good officers, but many of the soldiers were poor.

Q: So that was the 1869th?

A: Yes, the night before we left Florida there was a riot in Tallahassee, and one local girl raped. I was troop train commander and had to take two or three of the accused overseas under guard. It was just a bad deal. As soon as we got to Guam, the prisoners had to go home to be tried.

Also, this battalion was not nearly as proficient as the 1895th. This time they didn't have the trained people to call on. Attitudes were bad. It was a tough battalion. The war ended shortly after I got to Guam the second time. I was ordered to the United States Army Strategic Air Force, USASTAF. That was the forerunner of the Strategic Air Command, and I was a charter member.

I was in USASTAF when it was set up in Guam. Another engineer, Colonel [Bob] Tarbox, was out there along with many other engineer friends on the island—Ingwersen, [Jim] Betts, [Bill] Roos.

I stayed with the USASTAF staff several months. Brigadier General Curtis LeMay was commander when I was sent to the Philippines to join the Pacific Air Command, United States Army, headquartered at Fort McKinley under Lieutenant General Ennis Whitehead.

I was in the engineer section. Colonel Walker Milner was the engineer. As a captain, I had the job of inventorying the airfields in the Pacific and making a recommendation on which ones should be kept operational and which ones should be put on standby or abandoned-this was an interesting job. We flew in a B-25, the old Mitchell bomber, twin-tailed, two-engine type used on the raid in Tokyo.

We lost an engine on one recon and had to land in the jungle-stayed up there several days until we were able to get out. We were not in any big trouble, but I've been in more pleasant places.

We inventoried a lot of airfields, made up a list, and recommended those to keep. I was a captain. Today it would take 50 or 60 people to do a staff study and all that. I guess even then it was reviewed pretty carefully.

We weren't in the Philippines very long, but I met my wife-to-be there. She was a flight nurse-and a very lovely nurse, too!

Q: Where?

A: In the Philippines. Fort McKinley, Manila. Then we went up to Tokyo. I had been to Tokyo on temporary duty earlier, right after the war ended. I came back to the Philippines and then to Tokyo again in March of 1945. I stayed in Tokyo about two years. During this time they separated the Air Force, and my command was then called Far East Air Forces.

General [Hugh] Casey was the engineer for [Douglas] MacArthur. David Parker worked for him. I was still with Colonel Milner and the Air Force.

In Tokyo, I was put in charge of repairs and utilities. I had to write the R and U [repairs and utilities] program for the Pacific theater. That was a fairly heady job in those days, including fire protection regulations and so on. I had one civilian, a fellow named Peterson, who was just outstanding—Pete Peterson; and a civilian lady-Marie Hubbard. I had two lieutenants working for me-Fayette L.Worthington and [William V.] McGuinnes [Jr.] I think that was it-two lieutenants, Marie Hubbard, Peterson, myself, and a Japanese girl. We wrote the regulations, put the budget together, did the whole thing. I couldn't believe it, and I was still a captain. General Casey gave me a commendation medal, my first award.

Those were the days when the theater commander could promote to major. Jim Hottenroth was the exec. Somehow or other, my recommendation didn't get in until about the 25th or 26th of February. On the 28th, the rule was changed to where all field grade promotions had to be approved by the Department of the Army. My promotion for major didn't go in on time. I finally made major about three years later, but I had dropped behind my peers in that little deal.

The Japanese, even though we had just defeated them in the war, were excellent people to deal with. Neat, clean, and they seemed to respect the Army, the Americans. General MacArthur was doing a magnificent job with the local situation. The American Army lived fairly well in Japan-much better than in the Philippines. I had good quarters; not luxurious, but a private room in a nice building. I traveled quite a bit around the islands because of the fire regulations and maintenance requirements. We had a couple of earthquakes, got caught in the elevator once. I never could get used to the women coming in to clean the toilets while I was in there.

You know, life in Japan was really quite pleasant, and besides, I made contacts with many people who showed up later in my life—Dave Parker, as I mentioned, and Colonel [George] Bixby. Colonel Milner, Hottenroth, of course, and Colonel Vandenberg and Don Eister were there.

Q: Can you tell me a little more about the construction on Guam?

A: We had a Seabee battalion at the time with us. Two battalions built that B-29 airfield, now Anderson Air Force Base. That took the whole battalion, practically. We did a few odds and ends. I put a road in up Mount Santa Rosa, which was quite an expedient engineering feat.

Q: In what sense?

A: There was a signal corps unit on top of this mountain. Because there was only a very circuitous trail to get there, they wanted a new, straight road. I was given the job to build it. The problem was how to get there. There were no maps of the trail, and adequate survey equipment could not be taken from the airfield. So we devised a little system for drawing a map, which turned out quite well. I used a plane table, a straight edge, a compass, and a soldier with a couple of coconuts.

I would orient the plane table with the compass. This enlisted man would count the paces along the line of sight until he had to turn. Then he would put down a coconut and yell out the number of paces. I would then convert the paces to a distance and draw a line from the last point to his new position. I would then realign the plane table over the next coconut and send him off again.

Finally, we got to the camp some 12 miles away. Then we connected point A where we started and point B where we stopped with a straight line and took a final compass reading. I said, "Okay, that's the line we're going to build this road on. Hope it comes out at the camp on the other end!" And it did.

Later, the 1869th, my second battalion, started another field called Northwest Field. It was never finished.

I was still in Guam when the war ended. All the B-29s and P-38s and everything else were dancing around up in the sky, buzzing the airstrip, and other celebration antics.

Q: What was the climate like on Guam?

A: It was nice weather, except when the typhoons came through, and the frogs. There were frogs all over. Of course, the jungle was just full of frogs and rats. You knock down the jungle and all these things run out. Lizards also.

I never saw so many rats in my life as in that jungle. Deer also. The frogs would come out at night onto the warm asphalt roads. You couldn't miss them because there were so many. Guam was a pretty decent place once the war ended. You know, Guam is where Japanese soldiers kept turning up in the jungle years and years later.

Q: What would you say was the greatest engineering challenge in constructing North Field?

A: Well, of course, we built on coral, and I recall excavation by blasting as the toughest on equipment and men. The coral made a good, solid base. We also had problems acquiring grade and aggregates for asphalt plants.

Q: Was Northwest Field-which the second battalion built-very close by?

A: It wasn't far away. I'd say five to ten miles from North Field.

Q: That commendation from Casey, about when was that?

A: I don't want to make too much out of it.

Q: I was just trying to pin down the time.

A: It had to have been in 1945, 1946, 1947. Early 1947 maybe. Yes. I left in 1947 to come home and get married and go to school.

Q: How would you assess General Casey from your experiences there?

A: We were all very impressed with General Casey. I didn't see that much of him, incidentally, except at meetings. I would go to all the meetings as the Air Force engineer liaison with the Army. I was always the junior officer. Most of the others were colonels and generals.

Geraldine King, from Wilmington, North Carolina, as an Army nurse in Tokyo, Japan, in 1946, a year before her marriage to Captain John W. Morris.

Q: Are there any other aspects of the Tokyo assignment that you would like to cover?

A: There are a couple of other points and events in Tokyo which might be of interest before leaving that assignment.

First, I mentioned meeting my wife in the Philippines. Gerry had come to Tokyo several months before I did. When I arrived we renewed our acquaintance, and from the spring of 1946 to her departure for the United States on the 23d of November 1946, we saw a lot of each other and decided we would be married back in the States. We thought about being married in Japan and staying there because it was an excellent time and place to have a family and to be together. The living conditions would have been very attractive, and we had learned the lifestyle and found ourselves very happy in Japan-Tokyo particularly.

However, I had been notified that I could attend graduate school at the University of Iowa in pursuit of a master's degree. That, to me, was important, and so, after discussing it, we decided that the best arrangement would be to be married on my return in the spring of 1947.

The wedding date was set for 12 May, which happened to be the date on which my parents had been married, at Saint John's Church in Wilmington, North Carolina. My departure from Japan was planned for early April, and that would allow me ample time to attend to the preliminary arrangements necessary for the wedding.

Unfortunately, the Texas City disaster occurred, and the servicemen in Japan with

families in Texas City were given priority. My return to the States was delayed indefinitely until those evacuations had been completed. As it happened, I left Japan in late April and began the trip home. In Hawaii we changed aircraft for the last leg into San Francisco. As soon as we landed in San Francisco, our whole crew and passengers were put in quarantine because there had been evidence that a rat had gotten into the baggage on the leg from Tokyo to Hawaii. That took two more days.

So time was getting very short, and transportation from the West Coast to the East Coast was spotty, so I ended up hitchhiking by air from Travis Field near San Francisco to Craig Field in Alabama in a twin-engine C-45 aircraft, unpressurized. Having arrived in Craig, I had to get to Washington, which took an extra day. Finally, I was able to get my feet on the ground in my home in Princess Anne, Maryland, and begin to make the arrangements to get to North Carolina, which I did immediately, around the 3d or 4th of May. So, thanks to Gerry's hard work and good planning, the wedding came off on schedule. However, there was a period of some concern when our invitations, having already been sent out, might have to be changed.

Shortly after our marriage we headed west in a 1947 Ford sedan, which my father had won in a raffle. My orders said I'd report to Fifth Army Headquarters. Being as naive as I was in the peacetime Army, we drove to the Fifth Army Headquarters in Chicago, which turned out to 'be unnecessary, but we were soon on our way to Iowa. Our classmate and best man, Dutch Ingwersen, had already arranged an apartment for us to rent, and I do remember that the rent took $100 out of a base pay of $193 a month. We started our married life and an academic career in Iowa City. Also, we soon found out we were going to become parents.

I also was asked if I would be interested in competing in the 1948 Olympics in London, based on my track successes at the Military Academy. Having not participated seriously since graduation, or five years approximately, and also the burdens of trying to acquire a master's degree at the University of Iowa, combined with prospective parenthood, I decided to pass up this opportunity. I've reflected on it from time to time and have never been concerned that I made the wrong decision.

The year was successful in several ways. Our daughter Susan arrived in February, and we graduated in June. Having gone through West Point in three years instead of four because of the war, the University of Iowa powers-that-be decided that those of us in our class of 15 Army personnel who had only had three years of undergraduate studies were not qualified to get a master's degree, even though we had completed the course in good order and competed quite successfully with our peers, both in and out of the Army.

It was a very competitive group. The Army people included Colonels J.C.H. Lee, Jr., Bill Van Allen, Ed Jennings, nine classmates from the Military Academy, and Art Grace [January 1943]. We were all quite high in the order of graduates of the course in civil engineering. The University of Iowa ultimately decided to award master's degrees to those of us who had only three years of undergraduate work after eval.uating the courses of instruction that we had taken during our three years at the Military Academy.

Q: Why did you choose Iowa?

A: I didn't choose Iowa.

Q: You didn't choose Iowa?

A: I had applied for an electrical engineering degree at Rensselaer and two other universities. Iowa was not one of them; however, in its wisdom, the Army selected Iowa, which turned out to be precisely the right place to send me.

While the master's degree was in civil engineering, the course was oriented towards water resources-sewage, water supply, hydraulics, hydrology, and similar courses which involved the work in the Corps' civil works program. We had a very good structural course that evaluated the design of dams, but to do that we had to know how to determine the reservoir capacity, runoff, and all those things. So Iowa turned out to be-from my standpoint-an excellent choice. I would use my studies at Iowa over and over again in the years ahead.

Q: Did most of your classmates and most of the engineers of your level, if not all of them, go back for a master's degree? Was that pretty common?

A: Yes. The policy in the Corps of Engineers then was for those regular officers who would remain in the Army after World War II to have graduate-level education. That policy became quite clear to me later when General [Emerson] Itschner was Chief of Engineers and I was assigned to the personnel assignment business. His idea was that every regular Army officer would have a graduate-level degree. It would be in a basic engineering field unless he had a strong bachelor's degree in engineering, and then he could take another subject, such as industrial engineering, but he would get a graduate degree, master's degree.

Q: That's a policy that begins to change a little bit by the 1960s?

A: Yes, we can get into this later because, as mentioned, one of my later assignments I served in the Career Management Division. In those days the officers belonged to the Chief of Engineers.

Q: Right.

A: When that changed, the Army policy was considerably softer than thatwhich the Corps of Engineers had managed under its own assignment centers, but we'll get to that.

Q: You talked about the fact that you'd had a short course at West Point. Looking at your classmates or civilians there, how well prepared do you think West Point had made you for this advanced degree?

A: Well, that's interesting—first off, you must keep in mind that our class and other classes who went into the war out of West Point had a unique maturation period, which does not occur in peacetime. We all came back from the war having decided not to leave the Army, having decided to make it a career, having gone through the war. Even though it'd only been five years since we'd graduated, we as a group, I think, had had experiences that made us appreciate the importance of preparing ourselves for a peacetime military life. I believe our attitude was a little different than that of someone who had not had those experiences.

Our 15 were all in the top 20 of the entire graduate college of engineering. Even if we weren't necessarily the smartest 15 or 20, our conscientiousness to do well was stronger.

Q: So Iowa was a pretty busy year—lots of studying and the new family.

A: Yes, it was a very busy year. It was a nice year, though, because our fellow students and families remain today as our dearest friends. The engineers, of course, are a fairly close family anyhow, and certainly our classmates were close. I mentioned a few earlier. Besides Gerry and me, the class of June 1943 at Iowa included my roommate at West Point, Frank Dirkes, and wife June, our best man and bachelor Dutch Ingwersen, and Jim Betts, who married Bonnie and named our daughter Susan. In addition, Dwayne and Harriet Terry, Trev and Helen Sawyer, Howard and

Carolyn Coffman, John and Wanda Bell, and Bill and Miriam Roos made a fine class. Many were newly married. The Roos, Bells, and Morrises started their families at Iowa. We were all kind of strapped financially, but we enjoyed each other. Our friends were our recreation, and the Universi ty of Iowa was a very decent place to be. There was no crime, and the student body was friendly and open, you know, and it was a good, Big Ten school with good athletic programs. So 1947-48 stands out as one of the best years that we had.

Of course, all the circumstances for making a good year were present. We did work hard-we didn't have a whole lot else to do except work I suppose—but it was productive, and all of us recognized that our effort would be rewarded by knowledge.

Iowa had an ROTC [Reserve Officer Training Corps] group. Colonel [William W.] Jenna was the ROTC unit commander. He and Colonel Frank Skidmore, an active-duty engineer colonel there for advanced work, were helpful to all of the engineer students. They taught our families, and the new wives especially, a lot about the Army and its customs. Gerry had a small advantage simply because she'd been in the Army herself.

Q: Let me go back for just a second. You were married in North Carolina. Is your wife's family from North Carolina?

A: Yes. That's my wife's home. I mentioned earlier the best man at the wedding was Dutch Ingwersen. We were commissioned from West Point in class standing order. We sat together and became special friends. We were together all during the war, and when I was married he came to Wilmington, North Carolina, from his home in Clinton, Iowa, to be our best man. A high school friend had become a priest and helped perform the ceremony. The Morris clan came down en masse and practically tore up the Cape Fear Hotel during the bachelor party and with the other festivities. My wife's home has become our second home. We have property down there.

Q: So she was a nurse?

A: Yes, Gerry graduated from James Walker Memorial Hospital in Wilmington. She married a lieutenant in the Air Force who went to Italy, earned a Silver Star in that theater, and was killed. As a result of those events, she decided that she would join the Army as a nurse and managed to get into the flight nurse program. She spent most of her time in the States training to fly and take care of patients in the air and so forth. In early 1945 her unit of nurses moved to the Philippines to handle the casualties from the invasion of Tokyo, which didn't happen, of course, but that's why they were sent to Fort McKinley. I was stationedthere. General Whitehead, the commanding general, had a reception for these young ladies and invited some of the bachelor men who were available. I was one of those people, and as the evening went on Gerry gravitated to Jim Betts, a friend of mine, and joined our table. That's how the whole thing began.

So she was a nurse and a very good one. From Tachikawa, 25 miles from Tokyo, she flew to Kimpo Air Base in Korea to evacuate sick servicemen. While her base was at Tachikawa, on her off days she would stay at Army Hall, an officers billet in Tokyo. The females lived on the top and the men on the first three floors. I was on the first floor. The place was very well managed and proved to me that men and women could live in the same barracks with no problem. In any event, I found the arrangement very nice since we could be together for meals and free time.

Q: You said you were well received by the civilian students at Iowa. Their experience had probably been somewhat similar to yours. They were probably veterans going back to school?

A: Some of them were, yes.

Q: There was a real community there?

A: The younger students were not. Among the graduate students, we did have some veterans. Some of our professors had been involved in the military, not necessarily the war, but the Army students were a cohesive unit. There was no other group like our group. There may have been individuals and there certainly were some very fine people, but we became very competitive within ourselves. They only gave us three A's per course. Our group was graded on a curve, and if you got C, you had to get an A if you wanted a B average. That happened to me in fluid mechanics. It was a summer make-up course. Well, then I felt that I had to get an A. I had to compete with these smart guys, like Van Allen and Jennings and Lee, to get my A. Well, I managed-I got a couple.

Q: Pretty stiff competition.

A: Very stiff, but it was a challenge and brought out the best. Also a lot of fun.

Q: So you finished up your studies there in July, the summer of 1948, at Iowa?

A: Yes, June, and from there we were sent directly to the Engineer Officers Advanced Course at Fort Belvoir.

As a captain I couldn't get quarters at Fort Belvoir when I reported to the advanced course. Gerry and I could not find a place to rent because the post-World War II housing situation was still very critical. Finally, as did most of our group, we bought a house in Alexandria, off of Route 1.

It was a real shoe box, about 900 square feet, and we paid $7,500 for it. I borrowed $500 from my father for the down payment. The thing had no heating system. Whoever had lived in there had sold the heating system; the house was a mess. Looking back on it, I'm a bit ashamed of putting my family in it, but we had many friends who would come over on weekends and help fix up this house. I had an uncle who was in the heating and plumbing business, so he put in the heating system for me. I sold it in April 1949 once our overseas orders were announced and made a little money on it.

There were several students in our area so we had car pools, and the girls could get together and work out their transportation problems. The house we had has been torn down and replaced by a 7-Eleven.

The advanced course was a required course to prepare captains to become company commanders. I'd already been a company commander, as had almost everybody else in the class that I know of. Having just come from graduate school, our study habits were good, so we really had a very easy and interesting year because it was a different subject.

The most interesting event that particular year was the blizzard of 1949, which created "Operation Snowbound." Major General Lewis A. Pick was the Missouri River Division engineer in Omaha, and President [Harry] Truman asked him if he could help relieve the suffering of both people and livestock.

General Pick agreed, and I was one of 10 or 15 officers pulled out of the advanced course in Belvoir and sent to Omaha, Nebraska, to assist in relieving the blizzard problems. We arrived at General Pick's office about 3 o'clock in the morning. He came in, half asleep I think, but very sure of what he was going to do. He sat us all down around the table, and in front of each of us was a purchase order book, a set of car keys, and a map.

He said, "Now, the map tells you where you're going, the car keys will get you there, and that little coupon book allows you to buy whatever you need to do your job. So, as soon as this meeting's over, I want you all to take off, and I don't want to hear any more from you unless you've got a serious problem that you just can't handle. I don't think any of you are going to have any problems like that"-or words to that effect.

I went to North Platte. I stayed at the Pawnee Hotel. We spent about ten days, two weeks, delivering food to cattle. People were okay in general. The cattle, though, were in terrible shape because the ground was frozen and there was nothing to eat. The stubs of the grass or wheat that had been harvested were all they could get, and they'd paw into this crusty ice to get to food. It was actually frozen so hard they'd break their hooves. It was very sad. One family had a prize bull they'd just paid $3,000 or $4,000 for, and they had to destroy it.

We opened up a lot of roads, took food in to the livestock. The Air Force dropped hay out of the airplanes. Everybody remembers that. They probably hit more cows-killed more cows with hay-than they fed, but nevertheless it was a good public relations effort.

I was assigned to a Major "Moon" Mullins. Clyde Ernest, a classmate, was also in the area. While I was there we got a call that a lady was having a baby out in a remote area. She just couldn't drive out, so we sent a helicopter and brought her to the hospital. That was my first real association with a helicopter, and also my first Medivac. That became a sensational item in the local paper.

Next, I received orders to Fargo, North Dakota. The problem in North Dakota was the opposite from Nebraska. The cattle were okay in North Dakota because they'd brought them in instead of ranging on the prairie. The people had had so much snow and ground blizzards that they couldn't get to town to get food. So our job there was to open up roads and let the people out. Arriving in Fargo, I was told I was going to go to Bowbells, North Dakota. Bowbells is a little community 12 miles south of the Canadian line. It's the county seat of Divide County, as I recall. The nearest town to it of any size was Kenmore.

I was sent up there in an Army L-4, a single-engine observation plane with skis. The pilot got as far as Kenmore, but the wind was blowing so hard he could not go farther and said he could either let me out or take me back. I said, "Let me out. I'm halfway." He landed, and when he did, one ski broke through the snow and flipped the plane over. Didn't hurt anybody or the plane, especially. I got out with all my baggage and parka and really had no idea where I was except on the map.

Finally, some fellow with a Piper Cub, a red Piper Cub, came up, and he said, "Where are you going, Captain?"

I said, "I'm trying to get to Bowbells."

He said, "I'll take you."

I said, "Are you sure you can get up there? This guy couldn't get there."

"Well, my plane's better; I know the area. I know how to fly in this weather."

So away we went. We got up to Bowbells, and he landed in a field right outside the county courthouse. The field was crusted over, and the wind was blowing-it must have been 50, 60 miles an hour. I got out of the plane. Every time I'd put my foot down with my bag on that side, I'd break through the snow, and I'd go up to over my knees in the snow. I soon learned to shove this bag across the ice and walk behind it.

When the plane took off it didn't appear to move ten feet. He just sort of got up off the ground. The wind was blowing so hard he became airborne, and his problem then was getting turned to go home. Well, he finally got the plane turned, and that Cub looked like a jet taking off with the wind behind it.

Finally, I arrived at the courthouse steps. I was totally exhausted and dripping wet. I sat down on the county courthouse steps to catch my breath, and out came one of the commissioners. He asked

me who I was, and I told him. He said, "You're in bad shape, Captain," and seemed to say, "Don't tell me you've come up here to save us." But that was true. I stayed there 14 days in Room 4 of the Bowbells Hotel.

Heavy construction equipment from the Minnesota and North Dakota areas had been told just to start towards Kenmore and Bowbells. As they traveled they opened the major roads. They arrived in Bowbells shortly after I did. By that time we had a game plan of what we were going to do, and using the radio the people were told when we were going to open Route so-and-so and that they would have 24 hours to get groceries, et cetera. Plowed roads were like double snow fences, and snow would soon blow into the cavities. Keeping the roads open was a real problem, so we would only promise 24 hours on any segment.

We ran a recon one day of Route 25, and we had traveled quite some distance to the far end so we could work back towards Bowbells. As we'd drive along Route 25, little fingers of drifting snow would get thicker and thicker and thicker until finally our vehicle just couldn't get through any more and we were stuck—fortunately right in front of a farmhouse. The people were very nice, but it was embarrassing, though, because I had to call back to Bowbells to get a crew to come and get us. The crew came, and a couple of hours later we were back into town, a bit smarter.

We were so tired at night it didn't make any difference that there was little activity in Bowbells. The tractor operators had canvas hood covers over the engines and up around themselves so only their heads would be in the open. They'd be very warm in there, so they were okay. We never shut down the tractors if we could avoid it because it was hard to get them started. That was an interesting job which helped a great deal during later duties, especially in Labrador.

Once Divide County was cleaned up, we were told to go west to Columbus, Burke County, and so forth. After that we were brought back to Fort Belvoir.

The unfortunate part of this whole event was that nobody told us when we left Fort Belvoir what was going to happen, and I could not tell my wife anything of significance. I would remember that later.

Germany, Savannah, and Fort Leavenworth

Q: Where did you go after your Fort Belvoir assignment?

A: We received orders to Germany. On the trip over Gerry and I couldn't share a stateroom. Majors could have a stateroom but captains couldn't. I was still paying a little penalty for my friend's going off on holiday back in Tokyo, but nevertheless we had a pleasant trip over. She was upstairs with Susan in a very nice cabin. I stayed in a sort of ward area with the men. We had no problem. We could see each other during the day. On our trip was Major "Jug" Young, Crawford Young, a classmate.

Just the day before we landed, Jug got his orders to Hanau. He was very happy. Then my orders came and we were going to go to Murnau-the Engineer School. Our old Ford had not arrived when we landed in Bremerhaven, so we went to Murnau on the train. The track was smooth and we had a good night on the train.

In 1949 Mumau, Germany, was not a big city. We were met by someone from the Engineer School and taken to the colonel's home, Colonel S. A. Armogida, for our first night. He had a great house. Our second night was in our assigned house at the end of a dark street with no lights, on the fringes of Mumau. The house was sitting on a hill looking out over the moors towards the

Alps. Right next to us was a tavern, so a few beers and the Alps prompted some gusty yodeling. That was our first night alone in Germany.

Our commander, Colonel Armogida, made a significant difference in my future. As our officers often said, "He was the commandingest commander." He ran the Engineer School based on very high standards. Just wouldn't put up with promiscuity or laxity, which were not uncommon in Germany at that time.

The Engineer School job would be my first three-year fixed assignment. I would be observed over a long period of time in the same location.

After a few months we moved to an excellent house. We made many friends in Mumau. A few we'd known before but, by and large, it was a whole new community. I began duties as the supply officer. I had no idea I'd ever be a supply officer. I thought if I was going to be anything I'd be one of the training officers, but the commander needed a supply officer and I got the job. In summer of 1950 I became the S-4 and was responsible for all supply and maintenance. In June 195 1 I was promoted to major.

As the supply officer I learned that there was a tremendous amount of excess property left as the German families moved out and the problem worsened as American-purchased furniture arrived. We had it all on inventory and had to keep all these records. Besides, we had numerous real fire hazards.

When I became S-4 we decided to get rid of this stuff. That was a big program. We had to locate the owners, explain what we wanted to do, and offer them any furniture they wanted and could pick up. We set up a day to do all this and actually returned tons of furniture to their owners. Our program became a good example.

The S-4 had broad duties-too broad probably. He would prepare the budget, get it approved, and draft the plans and specifications for projects. Next, the S-4 would send the projects to the contractors, receive the bids, select the low bidder, award the contract, then supervise the construction. The S-4 oversaw the entire cradle-to-grave process. Colonel Armogida was pleased because we were putting together things that he'd been trying to get done.

One day just before he was to leave for a new assignment he gave me a nice compliment and encouraged me to stay in the Army because he thought I had a good future. I never paid much attention to that at the time, but his thoughts came back to reality later. Anyhow, we finished up our tour as S-4 and then I was brought back to the States.

Q: How did your family adapt to living in Germany?

A: In many ways that tour gave us the outstanding three years in our military career as a family. We developed a good family routine and we had ample time for our family affairs. Wednesday afternoon was off in those days and we played a lot of golf and skied in Garmisch. We traveled to Paris and Rome, et cetera. Our son was born in Munich at the hospital, and as with the first child, I wasn't present. When Susan was born I was home in Iowa City, the nurse called and suggested I not come over till 6:30. I did that, but by that time my wife thought I was a little late coming. In Germany it was even worse. I was in Mumau; she was in Munich at the hospital when John was delivered by a doctor named C.T. Daniels.

I wanted to name him after my father, but Gerry named our son for me. I am John W. Morris II after my grandfather John W. Morris. Our family custom was to name sons after grandfathers, but she changed that summarily.

Captain John W. Morris and Gerry Morris vacationed in Garmisch, West Germany, while Morris was assigned to the European Command Engineer School in Mumau.

My associate in ***S-4,*** Mr. Willard Fritzinger, raised Italian greyhounds and we got a dog; his name was Carlos. We called him Charles and had him for 15 years. He grew up with our kids. We had a housekeeper, a Czechoslovakian refugee, who took care of the children. I finally got rid of that Ford and my captain's bars about the same time. I ordered a Riley made in England, a nice automobile. We brought it back to the States.

We had parties at the Schloss, a three-story officers' club. A local landowner had a large estate and this building was used as our club and transient and bachelor officers' billets. We had a women's billet which was very unsatisfactory, so based on my experience in Tokyo I decided to put the men on one floor and the women on another. There was a lot of hullabaloo about that. Interestingly, the men began wearing neckties and jackets-it improved the appearance, at least, of the officers. We never had any trouble.

Being S-4 turned out to be a substantive assignment in later years. Working for Armogida was important. He was replaced by Colonel Dick Jewett, Richard L. Jewett, who became a general. Colonel Jewett was a troop commander. He exemplified the military. Armogida was a different kind of leader-very strong, but he was interested in product, results, and while a strict disciplinarian, he was not "military."

Q: The Engineer School at Mumau. That's unusual for an overseas command to have its own engineer school, isn't it?

A: Many of the services had schools in Europe in those days. The Engineer School served a very useful purpose. Keep in mind, the war had not been over all that long, and Korea had started. There was quite a bit of tension and keeping the troops in Europe combat-ready was of substantive value. Our subjects included demolitions, bridging, fortifications, et cetera.

As S-4 I had to support certain clandestine activities. I'd get a call in the middle of the night to do this or that, and I'd have to take care of it. My wife would ask, "Where are you going?" I'd say, "Well, I can't tell you." The activity trained refugees out of Eastern Europe and dropped people behind the borders to learn what was going on.

Also, as S-4 I was responsible for the evacuation plan of all the dependents. We stored water, paper towels, toilet paper, rations-all the things needed if there had to be an evacuation. The

evacuees were to pick up a packet in their car and follow preselected routes into France. We had to practice that. There were a variety of things going on that kept us in some state of readiness, and the Engineer School was particularly important.

The Engineer School in Europe presented a very nice curriculum patterned after Fort Belvoir. I don't think it was unusual at that time to have schools. I'm not clear on where all the other schools were but I know the Intelligence School was at Oberamergau.

Q: Was the school responsible to the theater engineer?

A: Yes. The school commandant reported to the Engineer, U.S. Army, Europe, in those days. He was at Heidelberg, and that's where we'd take the budget. I had to go to Heidelberg frequently on business.

Q: You were there during a period of pretty dramatic change in Germany in terms of rebuilding after the war, I guess.

A: Yes.

Q: From 1949 to 1952, you saw a lot of changes over those three years.

A: Well, yes, that's interesting because when we were in Japan, by now five years earlier, Japan had done more clean up in 1947 when I left there, it looked to me like, than the Germans had done in 1949 when we got to Germany or even when I left.

Q: That's interesting.

A: The Japanese, though, went about their clean-up operations on a national basis. Every individual picked up pieces of tin, brick, et cetera. They'd stack it all up by the various categories of material and it would get hauled away on bicycles and coal-burning trucks and everything else. They had done quite a job of putting things in order in Japan quickly. In Europe I didn't feel that they'd been quite as aggressive in that.

We saw a lot of other changes in Germany. For example, when we arrived-they were using the reichmark, which was the old German money. There was so much black market going on that they converted that to the deutschmark and gave us scrip, which was at that time pegged about four to one, $4.20 in DM scrip to $1 in U.S., I think it was.

Of course, the Army was integrated in 1950–51. The Engineer School in Murnau had less trouble integrating students than we would have had integrating in the troop units, I expect. I don't know. In Guam I commanded a company of only black soldiers while the officers were white. I thought integration was the right thing to do and it proved out that it could be done, of course.

Q: Did you have German civilians in the school there?

A: As students, no, but my civilian staff as S-4 were all Germans except Fritzinger. Later one other American arrived, a Mr. O'Brien. The Engineer School staff included many Germans. Some of the professors were German. We had two German doctors at our little dispensary and they were quite good. I had firsthand experience when our son fell off and cut his head on the coffee table. They put stitches in him and you can't even see where, they did such a good job.

The school buildings were in bad shape because of the war and neglect, so we did a lot of rehabilitation. The houses were nice, however, and the service facilities were good

Q: Did you have trouble finding German contractors to do the work?

A: No. One in particular was always competitive. His name was Burgmeister, but there were usually four or five bidders. We went about it in the right way. I'm going to come back to this a little later.

My tour in Germany was the beginning of our appreciation of the Army-how the Army really operated, the business of supply and command and stability came for the first time in Europe. Also it was such a wonderful place to be. My mother came over and my wife and another friend went to England. My mother said she'd never leave the state of Maryland, but when that grandson was born, she came. We actually met her in Paris and drove home. That was very exciting for us.

Another thing I remember- s o m e things you just remember- t h e Queen of England's coronation, and the song of the year was "Cry," and then "On Top of Old Smokey." The big party game was charades.

Annual Christmas parties were held at the Schloss. We also had a wedding. Joe Cushing, who lives over here, married the secretary to the commandant. We went one Sunday to visit an old church, Christ Church, over in the valley. It was one of the oldest churches in Europe. We got snowbound, couldn't get out. I walked up to this farmer's house and he came back with two horses and just like out in North Dakota, pulled us out, towed the car behind the horses up to his place. We stayed there until we all got warm and had something to eat and drink. A nice experience. We enjoyed ourselves in Mumau. Still, we worked hard.

Q: It was during the time that you were there that there was a big build-up of American forces in Korea?

A: Yes, I thought I was going to Korea. I didn't want to leave my family, but I thought I belonged in Korea. It didn't work out that way.

Q: Anything else about Mumau?

A: Yes. Our help. Charlotta Egg-Lotti was our "hausfrau." She became a real member of our family. She loved our son John dearly, and I remember the day we left Germany like it was yesterday. I can still see her standing there, tears running down her face, waving goodbye to John. We tried to get her to come home with us but she was afraid to come. She was afraid the Indians would get her. That's true. She said, "Oh, Mrs. Morris, I'm afraid of the Indians." That's what motion pictures did, I guess.

Our other helper was a refugee named Panec. A baker by trade, but he was hired as a yard man. He took care of two or three houses. On Saturday he would come to our kitchen and bake cakes and cookies, and it was awful. Awfully good. His problem was he was used to making quantities, not small amounts.

Also, a local farmer would come in and cut the grass. He had a couple of cows that pulled this wagon, and he and the son had the scythes and the daughter would hold the animals till he had cut our grass. He'd rake it up in piles, and then she'd move these animals to each of these piles and they'd throw the hay on the wagon and they'd go away. They'd do that about three times during the summer.

Germany was a nice experience, but we finally received orders to Savannah, Georgia, to be deputy district engineer. I was beginning to wonder, by this time in Germany, where I was really going in the Army. I guess everybody goes through such thoughts. I'd gone through World War II; I had all the education I was to get to that point; I had finished my service obligations; I had a good tour in Europe. I wondered which track I was going to go down. Was I going to get into civil works or was I going to go into strictly troop duty? It was really a watershed period.

Our assignment to Savannah was very favorable. My boss was E. E. [Ellis] Wilhoyt, later General Wilhoyt. His wife, Dolly, and their four girls had a very nice home in Savannah. We moved into a lesser house, a nice, new home, not too far away, and started off our service as the deputy to the district engineer. His boss was originally General "Weary" [Walter K.] Wilson, and then General Charles Holle. Both generals became very important to me later. Wilson was only there a very short while; then Holle came along.

Just before our tour ended, Holle left and Brigadier General Pat Strong took his place. General Strong came in from Japan. I remember two things about him: he was from Savannah, Georgia, and he had written *Jack Armstrong, The All-American Boy.*

The tour in Savannah gave me an insight into a whole different world. We wore civilian clothes much of the time, we lived on the civilian community, and I got a look at the public works program. I found my work at Iowa, the graduate work, to be very applicable. I enjoyed working with the civilian staff. They seemed to enjoy being with Gerry and me. It just was a very enlightening experience. We had a big dredging program; the dredge *Henry Bacon* was there. We were building Clark Hill Dam.

Some outstanding civilians. Mr. Charlie Trainor, who was a technical adviser to the district engineer. Wilhoyt, Trainor, and Morris ran the headquarters. I was the least of the three, that's for sure. Trainor was an outstanding engineer, and he had Fred Facey, Engineering, and "Shorty" Gunn, Construction, under him. Savannah was a professional organization, truly. It was an old district. One of the things I got into was cleaning up the records and other accumulations.

I also became involved in the public hearings. We had to issue permits in those days, too, but we usually did that on Saturday. If we had a permit hearing, we'd schedule it on Saturday, and I would go out as the deputy district engineer and run or help run the hearing. Each would take 10 or 15 minutes or maybe half an hour, and we did maybe one of those a month at the most.

We were very much involved with some very powerful political people in those days: Senator Richard Russell; Strom Thurmond. We were trying to get Hartwell Dam authorized. So the civil works side of the office was quite busy, from the dredging, the maintenance of the waterway, the building of Clark Hill Dam, getting Hartwell authorized, public hearings for permits, et cetera. I mean, it's sort of a mini-Corps of Engineers with all the functions there.

We had a boat, called the *Danora.* The *Danora* had been given to the Army by the Chrysler Corporation in World War II. It was a luxury yacht, about 106 feet long, sleeping capacity for four or six people. General Holle would inspect and we'd usually take him on a little spin in the *Danora.* Mrs. Holle would come along. She was a great bridge player, so they loved to go out on the boat and the ladies would play bridge. One of our lieutenants was Andy Pick, and on one occasion the Chief of Engineers, [Lieutenant] General Lewis A. Pick, came to Savannah. Colonel Wilhoyt had been in the CBI [China-Burma-India Theater] with General Pick in World War II, and I had been in "Operation Snowbound," so there was lots to talk about.

Incidentally, one of the permits we had to hear was a permit for Hilton Head Island. That was rather routinely handled because we didn't think anything would ever come of it.

The military area covered all of Georgia and up into North Carolina. We had real estate responsibility as far north as Wilmington, North Carolina. That was kind of nice because I could go up there with Gerry to her home. Kings Point was just getting started-an ammunition terminal on the Cape Fear River. Savannah District acquired all the real estate for that.

Moody Air Force Base, Turner Air Force Base, Fort McPherson, Fort Benning and Warner Robbins were in our area. I was responsible for safety and some project progress in general, so I did a lot of traveling around.

Mr. Goldberg, the personnel officer, and I were driving back from Atlanta to Savannah one afternoon. When we got to Macon, Georgia, a tornado came through. It was a very serious tornado, and we could see this thing coming and where it went with a deluge of rain. We just missed it by minutes, we were that close. In fact, we even slowed down because we could see the damage that we had to go through.

I remember trying to quit smoking in Savannah, which I didn't do. Mostly I remember driving everywhere. We spent hours in an automobile going to these various bases. I can still remember Rosemary Clooney singing "Hey, There." They played that song about every 20 minutes on the radio.

In Savannah the concerns I had had in Europe on what I was going to do were diminished because I liked the Corps of Engineers' district work, both military and civil. I then decided I'd like to be a district engineer some day. In early summer 1953, Frances Hambrick, the district engineer's secretary, an outstanding individual, not only in her work but also as a very nice person, read each Army regulation that came through as part of her job. One day she read a regulation that said something to the effect that a major if recommended by a general officer could be promoted to lieutenant colonel. She took that order to Wilhoyt, thinking it applied to Major Morris. He agreed and recommended me to General Holle who okayed it. His deputy-a colonel whose name I don't recall-was not in favor because he felt I was not old enough to become a lieutenant colonel, hadn't had enough experience, I suppose. Well, that may have been true, but I had many classmates who were lieutenant colonels already.

Colonel Ellis E. Wilhoyt, District Engineer of the Savannah District, promoted Major Morris to lieutenant colonel in August 1953.

Anyhow, General Holle sent the recommendation to Washington. My old commander, Armogida, was in the Chief's office. When Frances told me the status, I called Colonel Armogida on the phone and explained to him that this paper was on the way. Timing was relatively tight. He said, "Don't worry, I'll keep my eye on it for you." As luck would have it, Armogida personally took it up to General [Sam] Sturgis, then the Chief. He got the Chief of Engineers to sign off. Well, that was it. I mean, that fixed it right there. I didn't need more than the top engineer. I made the list.

Interesting enough, there was another person on that list of some importance. His name was Bernard Rogers, my classmate, who later became Chief of Staff of the Army. The effect of that promotion was significant. I'd only been a major since June 1951 and this list was published in August 1953. Also, I caught up with my peers who had gotten ahead of me during World War II and it put me back where I would have been had the promotion from captain to major not been delayed. So that worked out pretty good.

Of course, an August 1953 date of rank put us behind the 7 July 195 1 promotions to lieutenant colonel, which include practically all of the classes of 1940, 1941, and 1942. That didn't bother me too much in 1953. Gerry and Colonel Wilhoyt pinned the leaves on me; our children were present. My wife was so enthusiastic about it, she came to Wilmington one weekend and picked out a car for us to buy that cost $4,500. Now, that may not seem costly today, but in 1953 that was expensive. So anyway, I made lieutenant colonel, thanks to Frances Hambrick's reading those regulations, and I'll never forget her.

Savannah was really an important time. Again I was lucky to work for great people who desired to help individuals who worked for them. I learned a lot from all of them-from Armogida, from Jewett and Wilhoyt-all outstanding men who made it easy to be good, really. You couldn't do too badly. They wouldn't let you.

Savannah clarified some objectives for me and it gave me the opportunity to meet some top people who later became very important in the Corps of Engineers. At the time I probably didn't realize how valuable that assignment was.

From there we were assigned to Fort Leavenworth, to Command and General Staff College [C&GSC].

Q: Could I go back for a couple of questions there? You were doing a lot of work for the Air Force during this time period. How was that going?

A: We got along with the Air Force fine. Actually, the Air Force had been a separate service only about five years, and they were getting their turf established, beginning to want to take over their own engineering. The effect of that caused the Corps to do a better job for the Air Force than they might have otherwise.

One of the big issues was housing. We were building Air Force housing every place and the housing was not as good as it should be. Ultimately, the Air Force got its own housing, and one of the reasons, I think, was that the Corps design produced a house which was not all that great. I believe that was the seed that ultimately ended up in the Air Force's doing its own housing and the Army using contractor designs.

Q: Well, you had some big construction on the Army posts. You had Fort Benning and Fort Stewart. In the post-Korean war period, those were big programs.

A: Stewart was an interesting one, now that you mention it, because the Air Force was at Hunter Air Force Base and the Army was out at Fort Stewart, and Stewart was in very bad shape.

We were doing quite a bit of work at Benning. I don't remember the specifics.

I wouldn't want to say that the civil program was any more demanding on the district engineer than the military program. The district engineer would probably say the military program took more of his time, which is not unusual because the civil is an internal operation and had its own management.

Q: I am interested in housing. What about Wherry housing? The Wherry program was in operation at this time?

A: Yes.

Q: Were they trying to build housing too cheaply? Was the program just too cheap in terms of each house?

A: That is true; cost per unit was the dominant factor. The other had something to do with standards. Design factors were an area with which I wasn't intimate at that time so I can only surmise.

Q: Then Wherry. Wherry was a sort of—

A: Cracker box.

Q: Well, on the civil side of the house, I think you mentioned Hartwell and Clark Hill. Was recreation becoming more important?

A: Yes. It was not a project function at that time, but recreation was provided at Clark Hill. Clark Hill was not quite finished when I left, but my recollection is that the reservoir area did include boat ramps, camp sites, et cetera. It was just part of the operational setup. Boating was one of the most attractive features to the local people. The reservoir itself was available for public use, of course.

In those days, we had cabin sites. You could buy or lease land on which to build cabins. The cabins became quite a problem later on. Criteria for these facilities were not very well established, so many were built that probably shouldn't have been. These sites were supposedly far enough from the reservoir area to not affect operations. It turned out some of the surveys were not well done.

Q: Savannah's now become a tourist area with a lot of restoration.

A: Yes. When we were there they started to do the old cotton exchange over, and there were some very nice restaurants in town.

Q: Did you have much interaction with the politicians? You mentioned them earlier as strong ones.

A: The answer to your question is yes. A gentleman named Lester Moody in Augusta, Georgia, was a principal political individual in that part of Georgia. He had the contacts and knew how to do things. He and Senators [Richard] Russell and [Walter] George were very close associates, Colonel Wilhoyt and Mr. Moody communicated often about political matters.

The political people were quite active. There was strong support for Hartwell Dam, now named Richard B. Russell.

As for the local political people, I personally don't recall doing business with them.

Q: Would you say that was a real training ground for you later?

A: It was. That's why I said earlier it was a landmark assignment. By the time I became a district engineer I'd had several other assignments that were also foundation items, but Savannah was the first.

Then we went to Leavenworth for the usual C&GSC tour. Had a lot of West Point classmates in the group. First time I'd gone to school with students who were from other branches. Always before, I'd gone to school with engineers, but this time we had all branches.

The military schools work you pretty hard, but they are a very good change of pace-recreation, in a sense. They give you a chance to put aside the pressures of day-to-day business, to think, and to clear your mind.

It's hard to single out anything, but again classmates and friends-Bernie Rogers and Bob Mathe-we must have had maybe 20 classmates at C&GSC.

Q: Were some of the Iowa people there too?

A: Well, let's see. I don't recall any right now. The ones that come to mind were not of the group that were at Iowa. Miles Wachendorf from Mumau was a student, however. We enjoyed seeing them again.

I don't know what to tell you about Leavenworth. It's just the traditional year. It does give you a lot of exposure with the rest of the Army, not just the engineers, and that was important to me because I had been only with engineers in my career to that point.

Q: Well, this is during the Eisenhower massive retaliation era. I guess a lot of the curriculum must have been devoted to nuclear weapons.

A: Yes, that's true and your question reminds me that President [Dwight] Eisenhower's son John was a classmate at C&GSC. In those days the Army started a nuclear effects course, and those who chose to do so could stay nine weeks longer to complete a special weapons course. I was one of a small group that did. Normally the scenarios were located in Europe using conventional forces. We had a few in the Pacific. We would then have a final exercise on employing nuclear weapons-where and what size and things like that—but that was an addendum to the basic education.

To encapsulate C&GSC, you learn staff work and you learn how to write a five-paragraph staff paper and order. You learn how to utilize the various elements of the military in various war situations, combat situations, and integrate the infantry, the armor, artillery, et cetera. Those exercises stand you in good stead for staff positions. For example, I'll still follow the five paragraph concept; you know, the problem, facts bearing on the problem, et cetera, et cetera.

The other thing, which is not in the course outline, is this relationship with the rest of the Army. You remember your classmates at Leavenworth all your military career. They're important to you all along. It's easier to communicate with people you know, of course. So I think that was a very valuable opportunity.

Besides the regular nine-month course, there was a three-month associate course.

Q: Most of the students there have probably been in World War II or Korea, or both?

A: Yes, I think almost without exception. See, we were all majors or lieutenant colonels, and this was 1954. The war had only been over nine years. You had to have over nine years of service to go to C&GSC. Again, I tried to quit smoking. Again, I didn't make it.

Goose Bay and OCE

Q: Where were you assigned after Fort Leavenworth?

A: Goose Bay, Labrador, however, initially, I was slated to go to Korea as a battalion commander. An engineer officer named Jones was assigned to Goose Bay, Labrador, but he had five or six children, and it was considered a nondependent tour. Colonel Dick Hennessy had come from the Chief's office to give us our assignments. Jones indicated he didn't see how he could go to Labrador and leave his family.

I mentioned to Hennessy that if Jones didn't want to go to Labrador I'd like to go because it was a construction assignment and I would like to be the resident engineer for building an air base in the Arctic. Korea was a nondependent tour, too, as I recall, Jones changed with "Snuffy" [Frank] Rhea, a West Point classmate, on orders to the Philippines. Rhea went to Korea, and Jones went to the Philippines. That's how it all shook out.

I took the Goose Bay assignment thinking I was going to be gone one year. My wife wasn't all that pleased but it was just as well to be there as in Korea. One day I was looking through the Army or the Department of Defense regulations to learn about Goose Bay, Labrador, an Air Force installation. I noticed that Goose Air Base had 40 sets of quarters. So I began to wonder, what would I have to do to get a set of quarters?

My new headquarters was to be Eastern Ocean District in New York City, of the North Atlantic Division. The North Atlantic Division was under [Brigadier] General [Clarence] Renshaw, who had built the Pentagon. His Eastern Ocean District engineer was Colonel Morton Solomon. Colonel Solomon allowed me to go to Goose Bay, Labrador, on a reconnaissance trip out of Fort Leavenworth.

I went to Goose Bay. The base commander was Colonel James Knapp, a West Point graduate and an Air Force pilot. He was well respected and soon to become a general. I went to see him, and while there I asked about quarters. He indicated they were for Air Force people. I asked about the one Army colonel in quarters. He mentioned that Goose Air Base needed him a little longer because he ran the seaport.

I indicated I would be happy to stay two years if I could bring my family. In response, he offered to ask the Chief of Engineers to agree to let me stay two years.

So he contacted General Sturgis, who was the Chief at that time. Ultimately, the assignments people agreed to let us stay at Goose Bay for 24 months if they would give the family a set of quarters. Colonel Knapp gave me quarters as he agreed. I came back to C&GSC and moved the family to North Carolina for two weeks' holiday.

After two or three days in the sun, Colonel Solomon called me and said he wanted me at Goose Bay Monday-this was a Thursday in mid-August. I complained that I just gotten back from Goose Bay and had not had any holiday after C&GSC. He then announced that the officer in place was being relieved and he wanted me up there at once.

So I said, "All right, Sir, but can I just have two more day?" He agreed and gave us until the next Friday. That gave me a week. We packed ourselves and took off for Maguire Air Force Base, the port of departure. Hurricane Diane arrived at the same time, and we didn't get to Goose Bay for two weeks. We stayed at Maguire.

Finally, I flew into Goose Bay with Gerry and the two children. Colonel Charles Duke met us. Charlie was the deputy district engineer, and Solomon had sent him up there to "hold the fort" till I arrived. We climbed off the airplane about 1500. Major Jim Guest, deputy area engineer,